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**ENGAGEMENT FORCE:
A SOLUTION TO OUR READINESS DILEMMA**

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL TIMOTHY D. CHERRY
United States Army

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

Engagement Force: A Solution to Our Readiness Dilemma

by

LTC Timothy D. Cherry
United States Army

Professor Len Fullenkamp
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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ABSTRACT

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Since 1989, the number of small-scale conflicts, humanitarian emergencies and other similar contingencies has increased at a phenomenal rate from 16 (1947-1989, the Cold War period) to 45 (1989-1997). The Army's increased participation in and long duration of these small-scale contingencies (SSCs), with resultant high OPTEMPO was not foreseen, nor was its impact on Army readiness. While combat arms unit's train for and execute SSCs, their warfighting skills atrophy and combat proficiency declines. This phenomenon threatens the Army's ability to successfully accomplish its primary mission - fighting and winning two near simultaneous MTWs. Because of increased participation in SSCs, the Army's readiness problems have become progressively worse over the past few years. At the center of the Army's readiness dilemma is the mismatch between current mission requirements and forces available. This paper examines the effect of engagement activities and SSCs on conventional warfighting unit readiness through analysis of recent operational deployments. The paper then describes the advantages of using specialized rather than general-purpose forces for engagement activities and SSCs. Finally, the paper outlines the force structure for a proposed corps-sized organization called "Engagement Force," which is designed to conduct theater engagement activities and SSC operations while allowing the preponderance of the Army to train and focus on MTW readiness.

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ENGAGEMENT FORCE: A SOLUTION TO OUR READINESS DILEMMA

The military has an important role in engagement – helping to shape the international environment in appropriate ways to bring about a more peaceful and stable world. The purpose of our Armed Forces, however, is to deter and defeat threats of organized violence to our country and its interests. While fighting and winning two near simultaneous wars remains the foremost task, we must also respond to a wide variety of other potential crises.¹

— General John M. Shalikashvili
Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

INCREASED ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES HAVE FUELED A DOWNWARD READINESS SPIRAL

The sudden collapse of the Soviet Union led to the abrupt end of the Cold War and sent many analysts scrambling to come up with new post-Cold War security assessments and strategies. While there was no consensus as to the greatest threat facing U.S. interests, it was evident that the U.S. must become a leader in promoting peace and preventing regional conflict. One new concept that emerged in 1993 was that of engagement – which is described as shaping the international environment by promoting regional stability and the peaceful resolution of problems. As stated in our most recent National Security Strategy document, “Today’s complex security environment demands that all of our instruments of national power be effectively integrated to achieve our security objectives...American leadership and engagement in the world are vital for our security, and our nation and the world are safer and more prosperous as a result.”² This new strategy led to a revised national military strategy that centered on the terms Shape, Respond and Prepare Now. “The National Military Strategy is based on these concepts. It builds on the premise that the United States will remain globally engaged to Shape the international environment and create conditions favorable to U.S. interests and global security. It emphasizes that our Armed Forces must Respond to the full spectrum of crises in order to protect our national interests. It further states that as we pursue shaping and responding activities, we must also take steps to Prepare Now for an uncertain future.”³

As the Army struggled with the promulgation and implementation of this new engagement strategy, it was also nearing completion of a major downsizing initiative brought on by the Cold War victory. This initiative reduced the active Army by 300,000 (from 795,000 to 495,000) and the number of divisions from 18 to 10. What in effect happened was the introduction of a new “engagement” strategy, that would require increased operational force deployments, with less force structure from which to execute the new strategy. Ironically, “the Department of Defense’s Bottom-Up Review (BUR) in 1993 based its operational requirements on fielding forces sufficient to win two nearly simultaneous major regional conflicts (MRCs) and to provide overseas presence. In determining force requirements, the BUR assumed small-scale contingencies (SSCs) could be handled as lesser cases by forces earmarked for

MRCs, without any negative effect on their capabilities for the primary mission. Since 1989, however, the number of small-scale conflicts, humanitarian emergencies and other similar contingencies has grown from 16 (1947-1989, the Cold War period) to 45 (1989-1997).⁴ The Army's increased participation in and long duration of these SSCs, with resultant high OPTEMPO was not foreseen, nor was its impact on Army readiness.

The Army determined that general-purpose forces would be used both to accomplish engagement activities and fight major theater wars (MTWs). According to the 1997 Quarterly Defense Review (QDR), "U.S. forces must be multi-mission capable and...able to transition to fighting major theater wars from a posture of global engagement—that is, from substantial levels of peacetime engagement overseas as well as multiple concurrent smaller-scale contingencies."⁵ However, the Army is structured for warfighting not SSCs, and therefore must tailor substantially forces for most contingency operations. Moreover, because Army forces train predominately on conventional warfighting tasks, units identified for most contingency operations require specialized training prior to deployment. Predictably, while units train for and execute SSCs, warfighting skills atrophy and combat proficiency declines. More importantly, while units are caught in the cycle of preparing for, executing, and recovering from SSCs, they are essentially unavailable for MTWs. This recent phenomenon threatens the Army's ability to successfully accomplish its primary mission - fighting and winning two near simultaneous MTWs.

The Army's substantial contributions to shaping and small-scale contingency operations also have a readiness cost. For combat units, the skills required for peace operations are oftentimes not those required for combat. Training and execution of such operations detract from combat training, and consequently from warfighting skills. Nevertheless, these operations constitute a critical, proactive component of national security activities, and the Army is best suited to conduct them.⁶

— United States Army Posture Statement FY00

The Army's recent readiness problems have been documented and addressed in numerous articles and congressional studies. Many Army and congressional leaders are concerned with how this downward readiness spiral can be reversed. It appears the number and frequency of engagement activities and SSCs will not decrease in the foreseeable future. "Based on recent experience and intelligence projections, the demand for smaller-scale contingency operations is expected to remain high over the next 15-20 years."⁷ According to Congressman Ike Skelton, "Smaller-scale operations demand more resources than military planners assumed. The answer is not to foreswear such operations, but rather to acknowledge the resource demands and meet those requirements."⁸ Similarly, a recent Congressional Budget Office paper entitled "Making Peace While Staying Ready for War: The Challenges of U.S. Military Participation in Peace Operations" recognized the readiness problem and even suggested an increase of active Army forces by 20,000 specifically for peace operations.⁹ The Department of Defense has not yet embraced the idea of more, and perhaps specialized forces for engagement

activities. "The QDR strategy maintains the requirement to prepare for two major theater wars and recognizes the need to shape the environment, respond to lesser crises and prepare for the future. Yet, it calls for cuts in force structure...and suggests more reliance on Reserve Component (RC) forces and our allies. [In Skelton's view], these are merely transparent excuses for making reductions in forces because of budget constraints, not strategy considerations."¹⁰

At the center of the Army's readiness dilemma is the mismatch between current mission requirements and forces available. Clearly General Eric K. Shinseki, the Army's new Chief of Staff, has recognized the Army's readiness and engagement challenges, as evidenced by his recent mandate to fill divisions to 100% strength and stand-up two experimental "transformation brigades" at Fort Lewis, Washington specifically designed for SSCs. The Army is headed in the right direction with these two initiatives, however these alone will only slow the downward readiness trend, not reverse it. Recent congressional interest and the upcoming QDR process offer a window of opportunity for the Army to present a viable solution to our readiness dilemma. This paper examines the effect of engagement activities and SSCs on conventional warfighting unit readiness through analysis of recent operational deployments. The paper then describes the advantages of using specialized rather than general-purpose forces for engagement activities and SSCs. Finally, the paper outlines the force structure for a proposed organization called "Engagement Force," which is designed to conduct theater engagement activities and SSC operations while allowing the preponderance of the Army to train and focus on MTW readiness.

WARFIGHTING READINESS HAS DECLINED

What I see is an Army reeling from the effects of decisions imposed upon it externally and internally: a sustained shortage of leaders and soldiers; high personnel turbulence created by an imbalance of force structure and national requirements; ...insufficient money at every level of command to train as a team of teams at the frequency necessary to sustain combat proficiency at home station; expanding peacekeeping operations which quickly erode warfighting knowledge, skill, and ability, creating a growing generation of young leaders who don't know how to fight as members of a combined arms team; ...and an absence of time and opportunity to focus, in a predictable fashion, on battle-focused training.¹¹

— COL John D. Rosenberger
OPFOR Commander, NTC
Congressional Testimony, 26 Feb 99

Prior to the Gulf War, Army warfighting units (divisions, brigades and battalions) were able to focus primarily on preparing to fight and win our nations wars. Reasonable predictability enabled units to conduct long-range planning and implement the Army's Cold-War training doctrine (FM 25-101). Divisions, brigades, and battalions produced annual command training guidance's with attached training calendars, 4 – 8 months prior to the start of the fiscal year. Quarterly Training Briefings were conducted 30 days prior to each quarter and focused on warfighting mission essential task list (METL) assessments.

Quarterly training plans designed to improve METL proficiency were reviewed, modified and eventually became "contracts" that were approved by higher-level commanders. For the most part, units were directed and resourced to conduct required annual external evaluations at battalion and company levels. Maneuver brigades and battalions were able to train extensively prior to combat training center (CTC) rotations and performances reflected this training. Clear METL focus and frequent training events at each echelon enabled units to sustain METL proficiency and remain in the FM 25-101 "band of excellence." Arguably, the U.S. Army entered Desert Storm in 1991 as the finest trained force ever fielded by the United States, and its performance in combat validated the Army's training doctrine. Units were able to achieve this remarkable state of combat readiness because they were focused on their warfighting mission, able to plan and execute their training schedules with reasonable predictability, and their training was adequately resourced. Unfortunately, for today's units this is not the case. Shortly after the end of the Gulf War, the U.S. government cashed in its Cold War "peace dividend" by reducing force structure and defense budgets. Coping with both the reduction in forces and concurrent increase in OPTEMPO, units are finding it more and more difficult to follow the Army's training doctrine.

The Army's combat training centers (CTCs) include Battle Command Training Program (BCTP), National Training Center (NTC), Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) and Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTC). These CTCs provide the best training a unit can experience short of actual combat. At the core of all CTCs is a highly trained cadre of observer/controllers, a professional and competent opposing force (OPFOR), and a state-of-the-art instrumentation system that replays what actually happened during each simulated battle. The centerpiece activity at each CTC is the after action review (AAR). AARs are sessions designed for units to identify mistakes made during the planning, preparation and execution of a battle so that the player unit can implement corrective actions. The CTCs and the AAR process are unique, and set our Army apart from others around the world. Not surprisingly, CTCs were widely credited for the Army's superb performance during Desert Storm. Today, unit performance during CTC rotations remains the key measure of warfighting proficiency in the active Army. Unfortunately, recent reports coming out of CTCs have highlighted the Army's declining readiness posture.

In early 1999, the Army's inspector general told senior leaders that "entry-level performance at the combat training centers continues to decline" citing lack of resources, absent leaders, high pace of operations tempo (OPTEMPO), personnel turbulence, and defused mission focus as the predominate reasons.¹² According to leaders at the NTC, year after year of declining training budgets coupled with the demand of non-combat missions in Bosnia and elsewhere have left combat arms units less trained. "Leaders here (at NTC) are unanimous in their view that units are arriving here at a much lower entry-level than they were just a few years ago."¹³ The negative impact of this lack of training is noticed at all levels. A mechanized infantry platoon sergeant with 12 NTC rotations noticed the difference between previous and current rotations; in the past "we'd spend almost six months training up. Once we got here (to NTC) we were ready to go."¹⁴ The erosion of basic warfighting skills is the most obvious indicator of

less frequent training. According to a former NTC observer/controller and OPFOR commander, observers at NTC are noticing an absence of fundamental skills and abilities at every level. Many believe the only solution to fix the problem is to increase the frequency of training.¹⁵ One of the primary reasons units are showing up at CTCs less trained is the impact of SSCs on the active Army.

Clearly the most obvious impact of SSCs on the Army is the decline in warfighting proficiency of the units earmarked for SSC operations. According to the Department of Defense, the greatest impact of participation in a SSC operation comes from removing a unit from its normal training cycle. Units require repetitive, cyclical collective training events using maneuver areas, gunnery ranges and simulations in order to maintain their combat capability.¹⁶ "Combat arms units (Infantry, Armor, Artillery) that are heavily equipment dependent face the greatest combat skill erosion when they participate in a peace operation, particularly when they participate without their equipment and perform tasks that are significantly different than the combat tasks to which they train" (Figure 1).¹⁷ As stated in a recent Congressional Budget Office study on the effects of peace operations, "Army units have shown a clear drop in their training readiness for conventional war after taking part in peace operations."¹⁸ Recently, the 1st Cavalry Division deployed to Bosnia to conduct peacekeeping duty for 1 year, from Oct 98 to Oct 99, and did not expect to reestablish and test the required high-intensity warfighting skills until March 2000 – 5 months after returning from Bosnia. Thus, one of the Army's premier heavy divisions expected to be affected for nearly 2 years by its participation in the Bosnia mission and would not be immediately deployable for wartime tasking.¹⁹ Further complicating the readiness issue are the second and third order effects on other units.

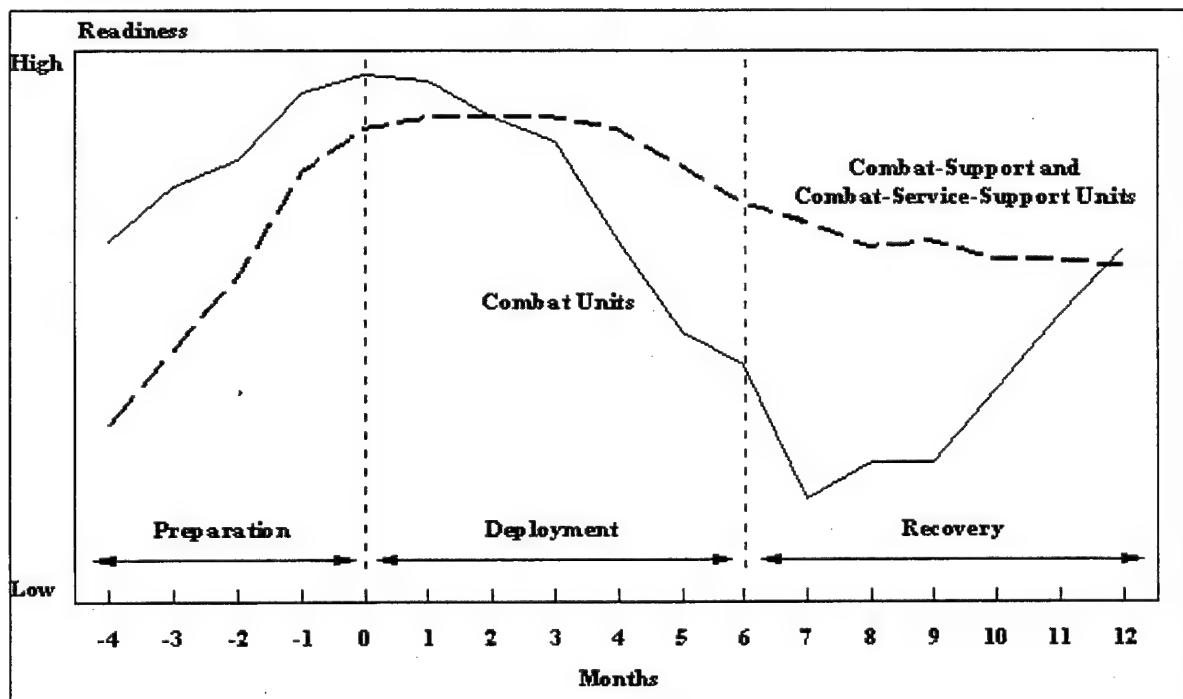


FIGURE 1. EFFECT OF PEACE OPERATIONS ON UNIT READINESS, BY TYPE OF UNIT²⁰

According to a recent Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) study, sustained SSC operations affect up to 3 times the actual deployed troop strength. Replacement units usually require 2 to 6 months advance notice for train-up. Once notified, these units normally stop warfighting training to focus on the SSC mission at hand. Once they are pulled out of the conventional training cycle, warfighting readiness begins to erode and continues to decline until the unit returns from the SSC mission. On the other end, units returning from SSC operations face decreased readiness for up to six months after return to home station in order to recover and reenter the normal warfighting training cycle. So for each ongoing SSC, there may be up to three times the number of soldiers and units at various states of warfighting readiness, and not readily available for participation in a MTW.²¹

Stay-behind units are also adversely affected by SSC deployments. These units may have detached a "slice" to support the SSC operation or provided "fillers" to bring the deployed unit up to strength. This can have a minor effect if just a few soldiers are involved, or a major effect if subordinate units deploy and the unit can no longer accomplish all of its wartime tasks. Stay-behind units also frequently loan to the deploying force, vehicles and equipment as well. Furthermore, soldiers in units staying back at home station are often needed to conduct garrison support more frequently, which further reduces their sustainment training opportunities. Under the surface, peace operations can have a significant effect on the short-notice deployability (and readiness) of many other units.²²

SSC missions also affect personnel and leader readiness. Initially, personnel readiness in deploying units is enhanced because non-deployable personnel are backfilled by replacements or augmentees. New personnel and augmentees are integrated, and for the most part, units are stabilized for the duration of the deployment. Upon redeployment, however, units usually experience a 30% turnover of unit strength through normal permanent change of station (PCS) losses and return of augmentees to owning units. Some battalions experience a significant turnover in staff and company-level leadership as well.²³ Personnel turbulence thus complicates post-deployment training and delays the attainment of warfighting proficiency.

GENERAL-PURPOSE VS. SPECIALIZED FORCES

We will not have room for specialists. We must develop a team that plays both ways, a team that is scrappy and willing to perform many missions, a team that is versatile and agile.²⁴

—General Frederick M. Franks, Jr.
Former TRADOC Commander

General Franks's pre-1995 statement reflects the Army's current position on support of SSCs. The 1997 QDR states that "U.S. forces must be multi-mission capable and they must be organized, trained, equipped, and managed with multiple missions in mind."²⁵ The Army's rationale is that peace operations (SSCs) should not detract from a unit's warfighting focus or readiness. On the other hand, the Army also

recognizes that a significant number of tasks may be different than a unit's wartime METL, and that specialized training may be required depending on the particular mission. In these cases, the Army's training philosophy for peace operations is "just enough and just in time."²⁶ Units earmarked for SSC missions are normally untrained on most SSC tasks, and require extensive training and certification prior to deployment. Unfortunately, in some cases the mission won't wait and units are required to deploy so quickly they receive virtually no specialized SSC training. This brings into question the ability of those units to effectively accomplish their assigned SSC missions. The difficulty of force tailoring and complexity of today's SSC has challenged the Army's use of general-purpose forces for SSCs. Theoretically it would be more efficient for the Army to use separate forces for SSCs and warfighting. Specialized SSC forces would produce better-trained and equipped forces for small-scale contingencies, while allowing the majority of the Army to focus on maintaining MTW readiness.

As the number of peace operations has increased in the past 10 years, so has the complexity of these operations. The nature of today's SSC operations is quite different from conventional warfighting.

Generally, U.S. military forces participating in unorthodox military operations will be inserted into complex, unstable, even chaotic situations that are highly dynamic and fraught with ambiguity and in which U.S. political leaders want to hold the line or effect a change without resorting to war... The OOTW battlefield is more likely to be characterized by the nonlinear disposition of troops, the absence of clearly defined... enemy and the presence of noncombatants... The preferred responses to the challenges presented generally fall within the realm of diplomacy, not combat... Not surprisingly, military concerns are generally subordinated in this environment to political considerations.²⁷

—Lawrence A. Yates
Military Review, Jul-Aug 97

Today's peace operations are likely to include tasks such as supervising elections, protecting specified safe areas, interacting extensively with local people, guarding surrendered weapons, ensuring the safe delivery of supplies, and helping rebuild governmental agencies or police forces.²⁸ Many of the tasks are much different from those normally associated with conventional warfare, particularly for combat arms units. The fundamental difference between most warfighting and SSC operations are the divergent tasks associated with each – the former requires destruction and killing, the latter peace and diplomacy. A comparison of likely mission essential tasks for a typical combat arms unit can be seen in Table 1. Upon review of these typical warfighting and SSC tasks, it is evident that there are more differences than similarities.

Although in the past it was generally believed combat units could sustain proficiency on both types of tasks, recent experience has proven otherwise. Since it is fairly evident that most combat arms units cannot sustain a high level of readiness on both warfighting and SSC tasks, it follows that without specially trained forces available, the Army accepts risk on short notice SSC operations. One example of a short notice, "come as you are" operation occurred in 1992. The 10th Mountain Division (L) received fewer than 3 weeks' notice before deploying to Somalia and spent most of that time executing their

WARFIGHTING TASKS	SSC/ENGAGEMENT TASKS
• ATTACK (HASTY & DELIBERATE)	• ENFORCE UN SANCTIONS & ROE
• DEFEND (HASTY & DELIBERATE)	• CONDUCT PRESENCE PATROLS
• MOVEMENT TO CONTACT	• ESTABLISH CHECKPOINTS
• CONDUCT RECON/SECURITY	• RESTORE LAW & ORDER
• MOVE TACTICALLY	• CONDUCT CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS
• CONDUCT DELIBERATE BREACH	• PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS
• PREPARE FOR COMBAT	• ASSIST HUMANITARIAN RELIEF OPNS
• CONDUCT COMMAND & CONTROL	• CONDUCT MULTINATIONAL OPNS
• SUSTAIN THE FORCE	• PROVIDE ELECTION SUPPORT

TABLE 1. COMPARISON OF WARFIGHTING AND SSC/ENGAGEMENT TASKS

deployment standard operating procedures (SOPs).²⁹ It is difficult to assess the effect that receiving or not receiving peace operations training can have on a unit's ability to carry out its mission. A number of factors are involved to include the nature of the operation and the unit's prior experience. Also, measures of success for a peace operation are not easily identified or measured. Still, "virtually every nontraditional operation case study involving combat units is replete with a litany of complaints that the troops were not prepared or trained to perform many of the non-combat tasks assigned to them. Such tasks included distributing food, manning checkpoints, collecting money for weapons, quelling civil disturbances, reassuring local inhabitants, negotiating with civic leaders, arbitrating between contending factions, and rebuilding infrastructure. The "warrior" mind-set so essential to combat can be the source of anger, confusion, frustration and failure when applied to OOTW operations."³⁰

Another change in nature of SSC operations has been the recent introduction of a number of non-lethal systems to help reduce civilian casualties, avoid unnecessary property damage and help protect U.S. personnel.³¹ These non-lethal weapons present unique legal concerns and require different ROE than traditionally used by Army forces. Some of these systems include sticky foam, aqueous foam, road spikes, stinger grenades, CS grenades, and a number of non-lethal munitions (rubber pellet cartridges, bean bag rounds, rubber bullets and wooden baton rounds).³² This rapidly developing non-lethal system technology will require new doctrine and tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), and will make future SSC training for units unfamiliar with these non-lethal systems even more complex.

The Army has also been challenged with providing the right kinds of forces for both SSC operations and MTWs. The U.S. Army's current Cold-War force structure is designed to accomplish its most challenging mission – fighting and winning two MTWs. The forces that are well designed for that mission are normally not as well designed for SSC operations, even though such operations are seen as less difficult.³³ In fact, for Operation Joint Guard in Bosnia and Task Force Able Sentry in Macedonia mechanized infantry, armor and cavalry units left their organic tanks and Bradley's behind and operated in Up-Armored HMMWV's and M113's respectively. Most combat arms units require extensive force

tailoring prior to conducting SSC operations, which predictably affects their ability to rapidly form and deploy. Predictably, once engaged in an SSC operation, disengagement in the event of a MTW would be at best extremely challenging to execute. Some of the required units for SSC operations include military police, civil affairs, PSYOP, engineer, transportation, quartermaster, water purification, signal, and military intelligence. These combat support and combat service support units are in high demand for SSC operations, and incur a disproportionate share of the Army's increasing operations tempo (OPTEMPO). Many of these units are in the reserve component (Army Reserve and National Guard) rather than the active-duty Army, which further exacerbates the problem. Some military and civilian leaders have raised concern about the high deployment rate and OPTEMPO of low-density units, and the deleterious effect on morale and retention.³⁴ Specially organized engagement/SSC forces would eliminate the frequent reserve component tailoring and training challenges by adding the high-demand CS and CSS forces to the active Army.

THE U.S. CONSTABULARY – A SPECIALIZED FORCE THAT WORKED

The mission of the Zone Constabulary was defined by the planning directive as that of maintaining general security in the U.S. occupied zones of Germany and Austria by means of an active patrol system...operating permanent and temporary roadblocks, participating in large scale raids, cooperating with the German police...and performing such other duties as might be required in the execution of the mission.³⁵

— The Establishment and Operations of the U.S. Constabulary
3 October 1945 – 30 June 1947

Specialized SSC forces are not new to the Army. After WWII, the Army began to plan how to best accomplish occupation duties in Europe and Japan. The Theater Headquarters in Germany recommended that a Military District Constabulary be constituted in each of the two Military Districts and assigned the mission of complete security coverage.³⁶ General Dwight D. Eisenhower approved this concept in October 1945 when "he notified the War Department that the police type occupation appeared to promise the accomplishment of the United States mission in Germany and Austria with the maximum economy of manpower and funds."³⁷ The elite Constabulary units were to be formed around mechanized cavalry groups and receive specialized non-combat training. The Constabulary headquarters was formed from HHC, VI Corps, and the three brigade headquarters from headquarters elements of the 4th Armored Division. The U.S. Constabulary had average troop strength of around 30,000 troopers assigned to 3 brigades, 9 regiments and 26 squadrons.³⁸

Key to the success of the Constabulary was the establishment of a school to train officers and enlisted men in subjects peculiar to Constabulary operations in a four-week long course.³⁹ Some of the specialized training included German language and psychology; raids, searches and seizures; dismounted and motorized patrols; passes and permits; cordons, check points and roadblocks; and riot

control and quelling disturbances, including the use of chemicals.⁴⁰ The specially trained cadre returned to their units and conducted unit sustainment training every other month to maintain proficiency. According to Major General Ernest N. Harmon, the first Constabulary Commander, the most successful phase of Constabulary training was the replacement-training program that required all replacements to receive four weeks of specialized training prior to assuming operational duties. The establishment of the school and unit refresher training every other month enabled the Constabulary to maintain a proficient force despite an average personnel turnover of approximately 12 percent per month.⁴¹

Although the U.S. Constabulary existed only for a relatively short period, it is an excellent example of how and why the Army established a specialized force to better accomplish an assigned OOTW mission – in that case, occupation duty. There are many parallels that can be drawn by comparing the tasks associated with occupation duty after WWII to our current peacekeeping operations. Both duties involve similar non-combat tasks that require highly-trained and disciplined forces, extensive interaction with local officials and civilians, decentralized operations at platoon-level and below, relationships with governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations, different leader and staff skill sets, and restraint through minimum use of force. The outstanding successes enjoyed by the U.S. Constabulary in Europe were directly attributable to its unique organization and specialized training regimen. The Army would do well to reexamine the Constabulary case study for applicability today. The establishment of an Army proponent for SSC operations and training may be the answer to our readiness dilemma.

ENGAGEMENT FORCE – ORGANIZED, TRAINED AND READY

A recent Congressional Budget Office paper examined four options for restructuring or expanding the active-duty Army to improve its ability to conduct peace operations while staying ready for conventional war (Table 2). Option four increases the size of the active Army by 20,000, and creates four brigades and three standing headquarters designed specifically for peace operations.⁴² If this option were selected, it would certainly alleviate much of the SSC burden from the existing active Army force structure. However, even this contingency force would require augmentation during heavy SSC activity. With an average of 8,500 soldiers deployed since 1990; a force of 20,000 would provide a rotation base of almost 2.5 to 1, which is less than the Army's preferred 3 to 1 ratio.⁴³ Option four would clearly improve the Army's ability to conduct SSC's, but more importantly would increase the Army's capability and readiness for conventional war. However, this option would also add significant costs to the defense budget and the SSC forces would be subject to a high rate of deployment.⁴⁴ Similarly, option two creates a separate SSC force, but the four brigades come from the existing active Army force structure. This paper also suggests a separate SSC/engagement force, but carries the concept even further.

Approach	Changes	Costs or Savings (Millions of 1999 \$) one-time recurring	
Option I: Cycle the Readiness of some Active Army Units	Select three existing active Army brigades; cycle each through high state of alert every six months; rely on alert brigade to carry out peace operations.	n.a. -2	
Option II: Reorganize Existing Active Army Forces for Peace Operations	Designate four existing brigades to carry out peace operations, and create three standing headquarters to lead them. (Increase size of active Army by 750 to 900)	30	90
Option III: Convert Some Combat Units in the Active Army into Support Units	Convert one active-duty heavy division into support units.	940	-60 to -210
Option IV: Add Forces to the Active Army for Peace Operations	Create four brigades designed to carry out peace operations and three standing headquarters to lead them. (Increase size of active Army by 20,000)	n.a.	1,900

TABLE 2. FOUR ILLUSTRATIVE APPROACHES TO IMPROVE THE ARMY'S CONDUCT OF PEACE OPERATIONS⁴⁵

Engagement Force (EFOR) is a CONUS-based, corps-sized force designed and focused solely on SSC operations, particularly OOTW activities short of peace enforcement. Similar to the U.S. Constabulary, EFOR headquarters' primary functions would include SSC training and evaluation, command and control, and doctrine development. EFOR would become the Army's proponent for SSC operations and the repository for SSC lessons learned and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). It would establish a school run by an experienced cadre of officers and NCOs that focused exclusively on mastery of SSC missions and tasks. Primarily a force-providing headquarters, EFOR would devote its full attention to preparing subordinate units for SSC missions through oversight, training and evaluation. EFOR would be subordinate to Forces Command (FORSCOM), and once committed its deployed Task Forces (TFs) would be attached to a regional CINC or subordinate JTF for the duration of the SSC mission.

EFOR would command two specially organized, CONUS-based infantry divisions. These divisions would perform many of the same functions as EFOR, albeit at a lower level. They would maintain the capability to deploy for large SSC missions. Organized specifically for SSC operations, the two divisions would each command 3 infantry brigades, an MP brigade, engineer brigade, aviation brigade, DISCOM, tank battalion, signal battalion, MI battalion, civil affairs company, and PSYOP company. The divisions

Engagement Force

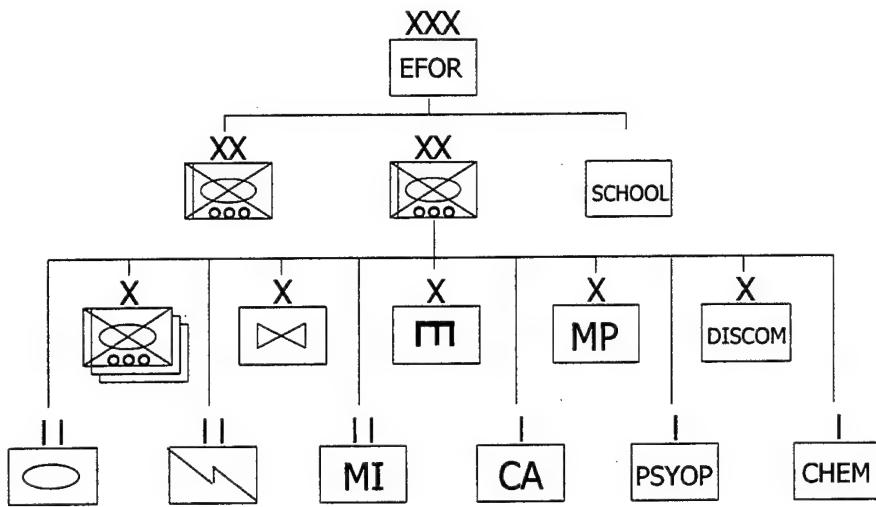


FIGURE 2. PROPOSED ENGAGEMENT FORCE ORGANIZATION

would not require an organic DIVARTY, division cavalry squadron or air defense battalion. The centerpiece unit is the infantry brigade, which would look essentially like the prototype "transformation brigade" and would form the base element of the deploying task force. The infantry brigade would receive augmentation from division troops based on METT-T analysis, and would deploy as a tailored brigade task force. Because of the decentralized and politically sensitive nature of most SSC operations, brigadier generals would command each of the three infantry brigades. The infantry brigade TF would become the force of choice for U.S. participation in unilateral, bilateral, and multilateral SSC operations. With the capability for six brigade TFs, EFOR would be able to sustain one or two simultaneous SSC operations indefinitely, and 3 or more for shorter durations. Ideally, EFOR could employ the 3 to 1 concept within each division – with one brigade executing, one preparing for and one recovering from a SSC operation. This would also minimize deployment frequency and allow for sustainment training at home station. Uncommitted EFOR elements could also be used by warfighting CINCs to execute their Theater Engagement Plans (TEPs), which in two AORs are currently unresourced.

It is important to emphasize that EFOR units would still maintain their warrior spirit and capability to execute small unit combat operations. The emphasis on warfighting would be reduced, however, to allow for more training on non-combat tasks. EFOR headquarters elements would become experts in civil-military, multi-national and information operations. Each subordinate headquarters belonging to EFOR would devote full attention to studying doctrine and TTPs, and preparing for potential SSC operations. Personnel serving in those headquarters would become specialists in SSC operations. All required CS

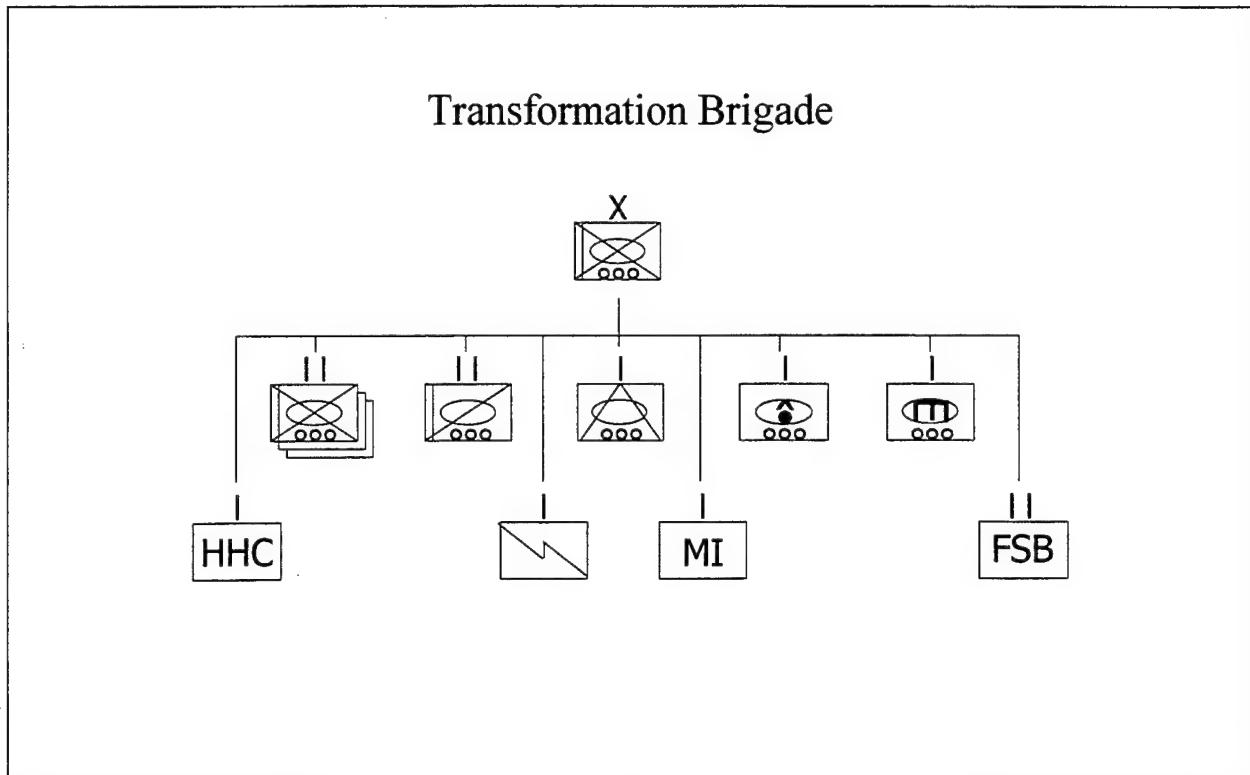


FIGURE 3. TRANSFORMATION BRIGADE ORGANIZATION

and CSS forces would be in the active Army, and organic to EFOR. Organized, trained and ready for small scale contingencies, EFOR would be prepared to respond to any short-notice contingency in support of our national security interests.

Who would want to join a peacekeeping force that is always deployed? EFOR would be manned from volunteers. Although, it is true that EFOR units would deploy more frequently than the rest of the Army, volunteers should always exceed requirements. People will volunteer for EFOR to participate in real-world missions, receive the increased pay associated with the hazardous duty, and for a variety of other reasons. Clearly EFOR is not for everyone, but many would enjoy the challenges and sense of accomplishment associated with operations other than war.

Option four of the aforementioned CBO study (Table 2) suggests an increase of 20,000 in the active-duty Army to create four specialized brigades and three standing headquarters specifically designed and designated for peace operations.⁴⁶ EFOR would require nearly twice that amount to field the corps headquarters, school cadre and two divisions. Although there are a number of possible solutions to obtain the required resources, the following recommendation is offered. EFOR should be formed from a combination of new and existing units. The corps headquarters, school cadre and one of the infantry divisions should be created as new units from the increase in Army end strength by 20,000. The 10th Mountain Division would round out EFOR. The 10th Mountain Division would require significant restructuring, but their extensive SSC experience would enable them to transition rapidly. This option

would increase our active divisions to eleven, with 2 devoted to SSC missions and the remaining nine and reserve component forces to MTWs. Could EFOR work within our existing authorizations? Not as well, but better than the Army's current strategy of sharing SSC missions across "The Army." If EFOR were to be formed entirely from existing units, then I Corps, 10th Mountain Division and 25th Infantry Division would be the most likely candidates. This would still leave eight active divisions (six heavy, 82nd Airborne, and 101st Air Assault) and all of our reserve component forces for MTWs.

CONCLUSION

The Army's major theater war readiness posture continues to decline because of increased small scale contingency requirements. Our current strategy of rotating SSC missions across "The Army" has failed – it not only sends novices to execute highly-sensitive SSC missions, but also disrupts the precarious conventional training cycle that enables our combat units to sustain warfighting proficiency. These observations are becoming more and more obvious to observer-controllers (O/Cs) at the Army's combat training centers. Unfortunately, the real readiness impact won't be clearly visible until the Army is faced with another "Gulf War" - we cannot afford to wait until then. With a more specialized approach, the Army can "kill two birds with one stone" – it can both provide professionally trained forces for SSCs and at the same time maintain the level of conventional readiness required to successfully execute our two MTW strategy. With a trained and ready Engagement Force, the Army will be better able to implement our nation's engagement strategy and respond to short notice contingency operations. EFOR is "a" solution to our Army's current readiness dilemma. Its implementation won't be easy. It will require a change in our culture, support from congress and acceptance from top to bottom. EFOR's implementation will result in a more efficient Army that is truly able to achieve full-spectrum dominance.

WORD COUNT = 5933

ENDNOTES

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² White House, A National Security Strategy for a New Century (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1998), 1-2.

³ Shalikashvili, 1.

⁴ National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, 1998 Strategic Assessment: Engaging Power for Peace (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1998), 156.

⁵ William S. Cohen, Report of the Quadrennial Defense Review (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, May 1997), 12-13.

⁶ Louis Caldera and Dennis J. Reimer, A Statement on the Posture of The United States Army Fiscal Year 2000 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1999), xv.

⁷ Cohen, 11.

⁸ Ike Skelton, "International Engagement – Why we Need to Stay the Course," Military Review LXXIX (March-April 1999): 14.

⁹ Congress of the United States Congressional Budget Office, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War: The Challenges of U.S. Military Participation in Peace Operations, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, December 1999), 9.

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¹³ Sean D. Naylor, "The NTC: Facing New Challenges," Army Times, 6 July 1998, 19.

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¹⁵ Naylor, "The Army IG Confirms Combat Training Woes," 20.

¹⁶ U.S. General Accounting Office, Peace Operations: Effect of Training, Equipment, and Other Factors on Unit Capability, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. General Accounting Office, October 1995), 29.

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¹⁸ CBO Paper, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War, 9.

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²⁰ CBO Paper, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War, 40.

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²³ Ibid, A1-2.

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²⁵ Cohen, 12.

²⁶ Peace Operations, 86.

²⁷ Lawrence A. Yates, "Military Stability and Support Operations: Analogies, Patterns and Recurring Themes," Military Review LXXVII (July-August 1997): 55.

²⁸ CBO Paper, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War, 7.

²⁹ GAO Report, Peace Operations, 26.

³⁰ Yates, 60.

³¹ GAO Report, Peace Operations, 6.

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³³ CBO Paper, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War, 18.

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³⁵ James M. Snyder, The Establishment and Operations of the United States Constabulary (Heidelberg, Germany: U.S. Constabulary Engineer Reproduction Plant, March 1948), 22.

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⁴⁰ Ibid, 92.

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⁴² CBO Paper, Making Peace While Staying Ready for War, 59.

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⁴⁴ Ibid, 61.

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⁴⁶ Ibid, xxi.

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